

The Effect of Tangible Rewards on  
Perceived Organizational Support

by

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## **Abstract**

Using survey data from 61 employees, a regression analysis was performed to measure the effects that tangible rewards have on the employees' perception of organizational support.

The analysis found that when employees have positive valance towards a reward and recall it frequently, they have increased levels of perceived organizational support.

The study demonstrates that when organizations provide employees with rewards that the employees' value and recall, the employees will feel more supported by the organization. Employees who feel supported by the organization are more likely to engage in desirable workplace behaviours such as increased job involvement and reduced absenteeism.

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

In order to obtain the optimal performance from their workforce, firms are increasingly trying to develop their human resource practices. By effectively utilizing their human resources, firms can gain a strategic competitive advantage (O'Reilly & Pfeffer, 2000), and become more competitive in the global market (Delaney & Huselid, 1996). Demonstrating support for their employees is one way through which organizations can elicit the optimal performance from their workforce. Research has shown that when employees feel supported by their organization, they will return the support by engaging in behaviours which are desired by the organization (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Employees who feel valued by their organization will actively pursue the organization's goals (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990), will display productive workplace behaviours such as increased job involvement (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001; Eisenberger et al., 1990; Tsui, Pearce, Porter, & Tripoli, 1997), reduced absenteeism (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Eisenberger et al., 1986), increased organizational citizenship behaviours (Shore & Wayne, 1993; Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2002; Witt, 1991), and will have lower rates of turnover (D. G. Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003; Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002; Guzzo, Noonan, & Elron, 1994; Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). In addition to these direct benefits to the organization, those who feel supported by their employer have also been shown to have increased affective organizational

commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Guzzo et al., 1994; Rhoades et al., 2001; Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996; Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Shore & Wayne, 1993), which itself has been found to lead to desired employee behaviours.

It is clear that an employee who feels valued and appreciated can be extremely beneficial to any organization, and the focus of this paper is to examine one method through which organizations can effectively demonstrate support to their employees - by providing them with tangible rewards. A tangible reward is a non-cash reward, such as a trip or a television for example, that an employee can use and enjoy. Rewards can be an effective way for an organization to show employees that they are valued because by definition, a reward is something that is given to acknowledge an achievement. When a firm gives a tangible reward to an employee, that reward is a material expression symbolizing the organization's appreciation of the employee, or his or her contribution to the firm. This paper investigates how different properties of tangible rewards can lead to an employee's perception of organizational support. Specifically, an employee's perceived organizational support is measured against how much the employee likes the reward, thinks of the reward, and links the reward to the organization.



## **2 PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT**

Perceived organizational support is formally defined as employees' "global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being" (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

Unlike previous literature, which focused mainly on the employee's commitment to the organization, perceived organizational support introduced the idea that employees have opinions regarding the organization's commitment to them. This perspective is important to consider because employees and organizations are involved in a reciprocal relationship. It is not sufficient to only examine one side of this relationship (employee commitment to the organization) but we must also consider the support which the organization gives to its employees. After all, employees' perception of the organization's commitment to them is known to impact the extent to which they return commitment to the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Moorman, Blakely, & Niehoff, 1998; Shore & Shore, 1985).

Mills and Clark (1982), explain the difference between two types of relationships: exchange relationships and communal relationships. An exchange relationship occurs when one party gives a benefit - something of use or value - to another party, with the expectation that a benefit will be returned. A communal relationship is more of a social relationship, where each party is concerned with the welfare of the other, and therefore, benefits given are not strictly part of an exchange (Mills & Clark, 1982). The relationship between an employee and an organization cannot be strictly classified as either exchange or

communal. In some cases, employees feel that the extent of their relationship with their firm is explained by the fact that they provide a service to the company and the company provides them with a paycheck. In other cases, employees have more of a personal relationship with their company. They believe that they are not ‘just another employee’ but that they uniquely contribute to the survival and growth of the organization. It is these employees, who view their relationship with the organization as more than just an exchange relationship, who are more willing to ensure that their tasks are completed successfully; more likely to come to work to fulfill their responsibilities even when they aren’t feeling well; more willing to help a coworker, even when it isn’t officially part of their job responsibilities; and who try to make helpful suggestions at meetings to improve efficiency in the company (Eisenberger et al., 1990) . The examples of communal relationships mentioned above are all behaviours that are typical of employees who feel supported by their organization, and because they care about the organization, they engage in activities that help to further the organization’s goals.

When employees believe that the firm they work for values them, they will view the firm on a more personal level, as opposed to an inanimate organization that provides their paychecks. Levinson (1965), suggests that individuals project human qualities on organizations, and then relate to the organization as if it actually possessed those qualities. When an organization provides an employee with a reward, thereby demonstrating its appreciation, the employee will view the organization less at arms length, and more on a personal

level. Levinson suggests that employees build a psychological relationship with the organization they work for, which then leads to a process of reciprocation to fulfill and satisfy mutual expectations and needs. In other words, when organizations demonstrate support to employees, employees will begin to care more about the organization and will behave in ways which are consistent with the organization's objectives.

In addition, Eisenberger et al. (1986) explain that the basis for which employees with perceived organizational support demonstrate favourable workplace behaviours is the norm of reciprocity. Namely, it is human nature to believe that something which is done for you must be repaid in kind. Gouldner (1960) originally defined the norm of reciprocity as the idea that individuals should help those who help them, and that individuals should not hurt those who have helped them. Gouldner goes on to explain that when one party performs an act that is beneficial to another party, the recipient of the benefit feels obligated to the benefactor. By extending this idea to an employee and an organization, when an organization engages in behaviour that is beneficial to the employee, it will create a sense of obligation for the employee to return the favour to the organization. If an organization does something special which benefits an employee, like giving the employee a set of golf clubs, then according to the norm of reciprocity, the employee will feel that he or she must repay the organization for the benefit which has been received. For example, in return for the golf clubs the employee may want to work even harder than usual in doing his or her job to help ensure the optimal results for the organization.

## *2.1 Antecedents of Perceived Organizational Support*

As explained above, in order for an organization to foster perceived organizational support among its employees the organization must demonstrate to its employees that it is committed to them. Then, as employees perceive that they are valued, they will increase their commitment to the organization. However, every employee's perception of the organization will be different, so it is important to consider the various ways in which employees view 'the organization'. For example, when thinking about his or her firm, one employee may think that the actions and beliefs of his or her supervisor are reflective of those of the firm. From this employee's point of view, supportive words or an unfair evaluation from his or her supervisor, as a representative of the organization, may directly reflect the employee's perception of the organization's commitment to him or her. In another case, an employee may believe that the organization's commitment to him or her is reflected in the company's human resource practices, such as a company pension plan or policy for time-off. According to Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), there are three primary ways in which employees perceive favourable treatment from their organizations: 1) through supervisor support, 2), through rewards and favourable job conditions and 3) through fair policies and practices.

In examining supervisor support, it has been found that the actions of the representatives of the organization influence the way employees view the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Hutchison, 1997; Settoon et al., 1996; Wayne et al., 1997). From an employee's perspective, his or her relationship

with his or her supervisor is perhaps the single most important relationship in the organization. It is after all the supervisor who is responsible for delegating work to the employee, evaluating the employee's performance, determining and influencing the employee's compensation, etc. Because the supervisor makes decisions on behalf of the organization, and because the supervisor employs the organization's resources to fulfill these decisions, the employee will view his or her supervisor as a representative of the organization. Consequently, supportive actions taken by a supervisor will not only be seen by the employee as direct support from that supervisor, but also as support from the organization (Settoon et al., 1996; Wayne et al., 1997).

Leader member exchange is the term which has been used to refer to the quality of the relationship and the interactions between a supervisor and a subordinate (Scandura, Graen, & Novak, 1986). Wayne, Shore, & Liden, (1997) found that because a supervisor is often the source or distributor of rewards, and because a supervisor is instrumental in such things as salary increases and training opportunities, the supervisor is seen as a conduit to the organization. In the same way that perceived organizational support influences the exchange relationship between an employee and his or her organization, leader member exchange influences the exchange relationship between an employee and his or her supervisor. Furthermore, because supervisors are representatives of the organization, the exchanges that occur between a supervisor and employee can influence the employee's perceived organizational support.

One means through which support from a supervisor can be demonstrated to employees is through formal or informal recognition (Wayne et al., 1997). Whether in a personal or professional environment, individuals respond to praise, encouragement, and support. In an organization, formal recognition such as an employee of the month award, or a plaque for achieving highest sales, demonstrates the organization's support. Support can also be expressed less formally through a handshake from the CEO or a verbal display of appreciation such as a "well done" from a superior. Any such expression which comes from the organization (or a representative of the organization), that indicates that the organization is satisfied and pleased with the efforts of an employee, helps to build that employee's perceived organizational support. In addition, Eisenberger et al. (1986) noted that the more frequent and sincere the praise issued by the organization, the more impact it will have on perceived organizational support.

The most direct exchange between an employee and the organization is the supervisor, and the next area to consider in terms of an employee's perception of the organization is the role of the company's human resource department. While supervisors have some discretion over the organization's treatment of employees, human resource policies used by the company further illustrate organizational support of employees. An example of a human resource policy that will influence employees' perception of organizational support is training, both formal and informal. When the organization encourages employee training, employees feel that the organization is investing

in them, which demonstrates that they are valuable to the organization. In their study, Wayne, Shore, and Liden, (1997) found that developmental experiences including challenging assignments, projects that lead to skill development, and formal training, positively impacted perceived organizational support.

Human resource practices which show recognition and investment in employees demonstrate that the organization is supportive of employees (D. G. Allen et al., 2003). When an organization institutes such policies or programs, they may indicate to the employee that the organization is making an effort to go beyond basic requirements, and is taking action to demonstrate to the employees that they are valued. Guzzo, Noonan, & Elron (1994) found that human resource practices that offered financial encouragement (such as tax equalization or children's education allowance for example) were also positively correlated with perceived organizational support.

Shore and Shore (1985) note that benefits which are available to all employees, regardless of their performance, are not associated with perceived organizational support. To some extent, actions like pay increases and promotions are benefits that employees may feel that they have rightfully earned through their hard work and contributions. Although the organization demonstrates recognition towards an employee by offering pay increases and promotions, such things are also tied into the employee's own efforts and are not a purely benevolent act on the part of the organization. For this reason, a gesture made by the organization that demonstrates its discretionary choice to

acknowledge and reward an employee is more likely to increase perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

The remaining condition to consider in understanding how an employee views his or her organization is how the employee views the fairness with which the organization carries out different activities. While supervisor exchanges and organizational policies will give the employee direct evidence of organizational actions which express acknowledgement or support, research has found that the employee's perception of organizational fairness also influences the employee's perceived organizational support (Fasolo, 1995; Moorman et al., 1998). According to Greenberg (1990), organizational justice refers to how fairly the organization is perceived as carrying out its activities. It is divided into two main constructs: distributive justice, and procedural justice.

Distributive justice refers to the fairness with which the organization is seen as distributing outcomes, such as training and merit pay. Procedural justice refers to the perceived fairness of the procedures through which the outcomes are distributed (Shore & Shore, 1985). Moorman, Blakely & Niehoff (1998) explain that fair procedures carried out by the organization are an indication to employees that the organization values them. They note that organizations that take actions to promote procedural fairness communicate to employees that the organization values and supports them. Their research found that employees' perception of procedural justice influences the employee's perception of organizational support. For example, imagine that an individual begins work at an organization having accepted a given salary, and after



working for some time the individual learns that his or her colleagues with less experience are earning a higher salary (Adams, 1963). The individual may feel that he or she is being short-changed by the organization, and may view this discrepancy as unfair. As a result, the individual may feel that he or she is not being treated fairly by the organization, or in the context of perceived organizational support, is not being individually valued or supported by the organization.

## *2.2 Consequences of Perceived Organizational Support*

Research has shown that perceived organizational support directly leads to workplace behaviours which are beneficial to the organization. Work related behaviours found to be positively correlated with perceived organizational support are job performance (Fasolo, 1995) and job involvement (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Tsui et al., 1997). Research has shown that employees who believe that they are valued by their firm will perform better at their jobs. For example, they may be more conscientious in fulfilling their obligations, or make suggestions that are beneficial to the organization.

Furthermore, perceived organizational support helps to explain reduced absenteeism (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Eisenberger et al., 1986) and turnover (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Guzzo et al., 1994; Wayne et al., 1997) in employees. The costs associated with recruiting and training staff are expensive, however these costs can be mitigated through organizational behaviours which encourage perceived organizational support. In addition, employee retention can be valuable for organizations, as in the case of experienced employees who have

developed close working relationships with customers. When a firm employs individuals who are skilled and effective in their positions, it is likely that these employees will be able to find similar work elsewhere. In order for the firm to retain these employees, it can promote perceived organizational support, which can be an effective method of reducing turnover intention and rates.

Another valuable consequence of perceived organizational support is increased organizational citizenship behaviours (Moorman et al., 1998; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983; Wayne et al., 1997; Witt, 1991). Organizational citizenship behaviours, or prosocial behaviours, are defined as behaviours which employees in the organization display that are beneficial both to coworkers, and to the organization itself (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Organ, 1990; Smith et al., 1983). For example, if an employee is helpful towards his or her coworkers, helps to train new team members, or makes constructive suggestions to his or her manager to help improve productivity, that employee is displaying organizational citizenship behaviours. In addition, organizational citizenship behaviours include the absence of deviant behaviours such as stealing, or lying. Organizational citizenship behaviours cannot necessarily be made mandatory by the organization. The firm cannot force an employee to be helpful to his or her coworkers, or to make suggestions for improvement. However, these behaviours are sought after by the firm since they create a more productive work environment, which results in higher productivity and profits.

In addition to perceived organizational support leading directly to the behaviours mentioned above, it also leads to affective organizational

commitment (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Eisenberger et al., 1990; Hutchison & Garstka, 1996; Shore & Shore, 1985; Shore & Wayne, 1993). While organizational commitment is not a specific behaviour, it is a valuable employee attitude that has been shown to have significant positive effects on employee workplace attitudes and behaviours. Furthermore, not only does perceived organizational support lead to affective commitment, but it also mediates the relationship between other constructs and organizational commitment. For example, Moorman, Blakely, & Niehoff (1998) found that perceived organizational support mediated the relationship between procedural justice and organizational citizenship behaviours. The fact that perceived organizational support is able to directly influence outcome variables, as well as the relationship between affective commitment and the outcome variables, demonstrates the power and importance of this construct. Perceived organizational support is an important construct to be considered by organizations because it influences both attitudes (i.e. affective commitment), and behaviours (organizational citizenship behaviours) which benefit the organization.

Researchers have long considered organizational commitment as an important construct in understanding employee workplace behaviour. Mowday, Steers, & Porter (1979), consolidated many previous studies and suggested that organizational commitment results in the following three factors “(1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values; (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and (3) a strong desire

to maintain membership in the organization” (pg. 226). According to Mowday, Steers & Porter, (1979), this definition shows that organizational commitment is not strictly a passive loyalty to the organization, but an active relationship in which employees personally contribute to the organization’s well-being. In their paper they developed an organizational commitment questionnaire (OCQ) which was shown to be internally consistent and reliable, and was subsequently used by researchers to measure organizational commitment.

More recently, Meyer & Allen (1987), proposed a model in which they identified three distinct dimensions of organizational commitment: continuance commitment, normative commitment and affective commitment. These three components of commitment can be summarized as the extent to which employees need to, ought to, and want to remain with the organization (N. J. Allen & Meyer, 1990). The Meyer and Allen model brings together theories which are suggested in prior research, and combines them in such a way as to account for a complete understanding of employee commitment to an organization.

Continuance commitment refers to financial aspects related to why an employee remains with a firm, including, but not limited to, costs of leaving the firm. Essentially, it is the idea that it is more worthwhile to stay with an organization because of benefits which may accrue as a result of such things as pension or seniority rather than surrendering them by moving to another firm. Normative commitment refers to the extent to which an employee feels obligated to remain with the organization. Normative commitment may be

thought of as similar to an individual's feelings of loyalty. These two types of commitment are similar in that they are both cognitively based. Affective commitment, the third component of the model, is based on an employee's feelings and refers to an employee's personal attachment to the organization. It relates to how an employee *feels* towards his or her organization. Affective organizational commitment has been shown to lead to increased employee involvement in the organization's activities and the pursuit of organizational goals (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). Perceived organizational support is a major causal factor in increasing affective organizational commitment (Rhoades et al., 2001; Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Shore & Wayne, 1993).

Perceived organizational support and affective organizational commitment are not characteristics that can be enforced or regulated among employees, yet they are qualities that can make an important difference to the firm because employees who possess them will be more willing to go above and beyond the call of duty. The difference between employees who fulfill their work duties according to the minimum requirements and those who satisfy what is truly required in a given situation can be attributed in part to the degree of the employees' perceived organizational support and affective organizational commitment.

### **3 REWARDS**

The term 'reward' is discussed frequently in the literature as something that is given by an organization to an employee in response to the employee's actions, and is something which is desirable to the employee (Agarwal, 1998). In some cases, a reward can be a cash reward, such as a bonus, in other cases a reward refers to recognition, such as naming a worker employee of the month, and at other times a reward refers to a tangible incentive, such as a television. The term itself is rarely defined in the literature, but in all cases it is assumed to entail any of the things the organization does to recognize employee achievement and to motivate future positive behaviour. A reward itself, by definition, is a type of recognition. It is this act of recognition that makes rewards effective in building perceived organizational support. In the case of an organizational reward, for example a plaque for employee of the month, the reward itself is a signal to the employee that his or her efforts are recognized and appreciated by the organization. Such a concrete display of recognition helps to increase the employee's perceived organizational support because the organization has made it undoubtedly clear that it values the efforts of the employee.

In a corporate environment there are many different ways to recognize behaviour and performance, and therefore rewards can take several forms. These include recognition awards, cash bonuses, free trips, and free merchandise. Each of these types of rewards has different characteristics and can be expected to effect employee behaviour and perception in different ways.

To increase perceived organizational support, it is important to find rewards that will have a lasting impression on the employee and will continue to confirm the employee's perception that he or she is valued.

A firm reaps immediate benefits from good employee performance and when the firm offers a reward for that performance, it has the opportunity to benefit from a repeat of the performance in the future. The fact that companies strive to increase market share, improve productivity and service, and enhance their performance is evidence that their sights are on the future and not simply the present time. Rewards are consistent with this objective because in addition to being appreciated by employees at the moment, they can continue to reinforce employee behaviour into the future. A reward is likely to reinforce future behaviour because it is a reminder to the employee of a special achievement. He or she worked very hard, achieved something difficult, and felt proud. The reward itself will allow him or her to relish in those feelings a little longer and perhaps serve as encouragement to repeat the effort in the future.

In order to be truly effective in developing perceived organizational support, it is helpful if the employee perceives the reward as being given at the discretion of the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). If the employee views the reward as being mandatory the organization will be seen as simply carrying out company policies. A mandatory reward, rather than illustrate employee support, only shows that the organization is willing to carry out obligations and therefore does not demonstrate appreciation for a particular employee. A

discretionary action on the other hand is a clear indication that an employee is valued due to the fact that the organization is making a point to recognize a specific employee. Various researchers have found that when employees view rewards as discretionary they have increased levels of perceived organizational support (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997; Moorman et al., 1998).

The next section develops three properties of tangible rewards which are expected to have an influence on perceived organizational support: the extent to which an employee enjoys the reward, the directness with which the individual associates the reward with the organization, and the frequency with which an individual recalls the reward.

### *3.1 Perceived Value of the Reward*

This study proposes that because rewards are tangible demonstrations of an organization's support for its employees, employees who receive rewards will have increased perceived organizational support. In order for this condition to hold true it is also necessary that employees value the reward.

Valence in this case refers to the value an individual places on the reward. If something has a positive valence it indicates that it is something that an individual is drawn to in a positive way. On the contrary, a negative valence refers to something that an individual would not be drawn to, or that would repel the individual. Valence is one of three constructs that is defined by Vroom in his theory of motivation (Vroom, 1964). In this theory, Vroom argues that among other factors, the more an individual values the reward, the



more the individual will strive to attain it. This concept is quite intuitive. It is difficult to imagine that an individual would exert tremendous efforts in order to obtain something that he or she really does not want. Conversely, according to this theory of valence, if an individual truly values something, the individual will exert efforts to obtain it which are consistent with the degree to which he or she values it.

This idea can be extended to the current study by considering the valence an individual has towards a reward given by the organization. In order for the reward to be effective in eliciting the desired behaviour from employees (i.e. perceived organizational support) the employees must have positive valence towards the reward. In the same way that an employee would not be motivated to earn a reward which he or she does not value, a reward which is given to the employee by the organization, which holds little significance to the employee, will not encourage the employee to think more highly of the organization. For example, if an organization provides an employee with a kitchen appliance, say a blender, in recognition for the employee's performance, yet that individual has no need or desire for a blender, then the blender will have very little impact on the individual's perception of the organization. It is doubtful that the individual will look at the blender and think that such a reward was a supportive gesture from the organization.

This idea can also be examined in the context of social exchange theory, which states that when one party performs a gesture for another party, the recipient of that gesture will want to reciprocate in kind (Foa & Foa, 1974). If

the organization offers an employee a reward which the employee is indifferent about, the employee will not feel compelled to reciprocate this gesture.

On the other hand, a reward which carries strong positive valence for an employee may have an equally strong influence on the employee's beliefs or behaviours. If an organization gives an employee something that he or she truly desires or values, then by virtue of the fact that the organization gave the employee this valuable reward, the employee may have a higher regard, or appreciation for the organization. For example, imagine that an organization gives an employee a watch that he or she has been admiring for quite some time. The employee will be happy to receive the watch, and appreciate the organization for providing it. The fact that the individual has such strong positive valence toward the watch is likely to encourage the employee to hold the organization in a higher regard for providing it. In other words, the more an employee likes the reward, the greater it is expected to influence that employee's perceived organizational support.

Hypothesis 1: An employee's perceived organizational support will increase with the amount that the employee likes the reward.

### *3.2 Associating the Reward with the Firm*

In order for a reward to have an impact on perceived organizational support it is necessary that the employee make the association between the reward itself and its source- the organization. After all, in terms of this study, the benefit behind offering tangible rewards is that the rewards are an indication to employees that the organization recognizes them and values their

contributions. When an employee takes home a plasma television which was given to him or her as a reward from the organization, the television is a physical symbol that the organization has recognized and rewarded his or her performance. This is the very reason that rewards can be instrumental in increasing employees' perceived organizational support; in realizing that the organization values them and their contributions, it increases the employee's perception that the organization supports them.

It is imperative that for a reward to increase perceived organizational support, the employee must perceive the reward as a gift *from the organization*. If an employee does not make the link between the reward and the organization then we cannot expect the reward to have an effect on perceived organizational support. For example, imagine that an employee exceeds a sales quota and in response, the organization gives the employee a stereo system. If the employee brings home the stereo system, sets it up, and uses it, but soon after forgets where it came from, the stereo system would not be expected to increase the employee's perceived organizational support because the employee would fail to recognize that the stereo system represents the organization's appreciation of him or her.

The connection between the reward and the organization is not necessarily absolute. There are different degrees to which the employee may link the two. For example, a direct link could be defined as the employee seeing the reward and immediately thinking of the organization. This would be the optimal scenario in terms of increasing perceived organizational support.

An example of a less direct link could be if the employee sees the reward and thinks specifically of the reward itself, or of the satisfaction he or she gets from owning and using the reward. For example, if the employee received a barbeque from the organization, when the employee thinks of the barbeque if he or she thinks of steaks, burgers, and summertime, then the link between the barbeque and the firm would be considered to be indirect. Only after thinking of these other things does the employee think of the fact that the organization gave him or her the reward. In this case, although the organization is among the things the employee links to the reward it is not the primary connection the employee makes. If the employee immediately links the reward to the organization, upon seeing the reward or thinking of the reward, then the link is considered direct. If the employee associates other things with the reward before thinking of the organization, then the link to the organization is considered to be indirect. The longer it takes to link the reward to the organization, the less of an impact is expected on perceived organizational support.

For example, if an organization gives an employee a trip to Hawaii as a reward for an achievement, then the trip to Hawaii is argued to be a demonstration of the organization's support for the employee, and is expected to help encourage perceived organizational support. Now imagine that the employee takes the trip to Hawaii and returns with many fond memories. When the employee reflects or is reminded of the trip, he or she may think of enjoyable experiences such as warm weather, beautiful sunsets, relaxation, etc.,

but he or she may not quickly associate the trip to Hawaii with the fact that it was a reward from the organization. Thoughts of the trip are rich with a variety of memories, and it is possible that these memories overwhelm the connection of the trip back to the organization. If this is the case, the link between the organization and the reward is indirect, and the reward is therefore expected to have less of an impact on perceived organizational support. From a firm's perspective, if the objective is to increase the perceived organizational support of employees, the ideal scenario would be for an employee to see the reward or think of the reward and immediately think "that's the reward my organization gave me in recognition for my contributions".

Hypothesis 2: An employee's perceived organizational support will increase with the likelihood that he or she associates the reward with the organization.

### *3.3 Effect of Value on Associating the Reward to the Firm*

The second hypothesis states that the more direct the link between the reward and the organization, the higher the perceived organizational support is expected to be. This hypothesis is further developed by considering the mediating effect of an individual's valence toward the reward. If the employee does not like the reward very much, and therefore has low valence towards the reward, then no matter how direct the link is from the reward to the firm, the ultimate effect on perceived organizational support is expected to be diminished. Recalling the blender example, even if the employee sees the blender and thinks about the organization immediately, the employee is not expected to think of how supportive the organization is of his or her efforts as is

demonstrated by the blender. The employee is not expected to have increased levels of perceived organizational support.

On the other hand, consider the ideal case, in terms of an employee having strong positive valence towards the reward, and directly and immediately linking the reward to the organization. Imagine that an employee receives a plasma television from his or her organization and he or she truly loves owning and using the television. Also consider that the employee makes a direct link between the television and the organization, and when the employee sees or uses the television he or she immediately recalls the fact that it was a reward from the organization (which is a demonstration of his or her value to the organization). On one hand, the television itself is something that the employee values, and on the other hand, it represents the employee's value to the organization. The fact that the employee loves the television, and is reminded by the television that he or she is valued by the organization, implies that the employee will see the television and think even more positively of the organization, and therefore have an increased level of perceived organizational support.

Hypothesis 3: The increase in perceived organizational support caused by the link to the firm will be magnified as the liking for the item increases.

### *3.4 Frequency of Recalling the Reward*

For the purposes of increasing perceived organizational support it is not sufficient that the employee makes a connection between the reward and the organization, but the employee must also think of the reward, see the reward, or

use the reward with some regularity<sup>1</sup>. Because the reward is a representation of the organization's acknowledgement and appreciation of the employee and/or the employee's contributions, this appreciation is embedded in the reward when it is given to the employee. Therefore, when the reward is present in the thoughts or actions of the employee, the employee will have an opportunity to once again be reminded of the organization's support for him or her.

Imagine that an employee receives a set of golf clubs from the organization as recognition for some performance. If the employee puts the golf clubs in the garage and does not use them or even think of them, the golf clubs can not be expected to help increase the employees perceived organizational support because they are not available to remind the employee that the organization values him or her.

When an employee initially receives a reward from the organization, the employee has a first opportunity to realize that he or she is valued by the organization. When the employee takes the reward home, and sees it, or uses it, there is a secondary opportunity for the employee to recognize that he or she is valued by the organization. Accordingly, the more frequently the employee sees, thinks about, or uses the reward, the more the employee is expected to realize that he or she is valued by the organization, thereby increasing the employee's perceived organizational support.

Say for example that an employee receives a digital camera from his or her organization as a reward for achieving the highest sales in a sales contest.

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<sup>1</sup>Note: the use of the word recalling in this study can refer to the acts of **thinking about** and/or **seeing** and/or **using** the reward.

When the organization initially gives the employee the digital camera, the reward will be an indication to the employee that the organization recognizes and values his or her achievement in having the highest sales. This appreciation then becomes embedded in the digital camera. When the employee sees the camera, or uses the camera there exists an opportunity for the employee to once again recall the supportive gesture of the firm in giving him or her the reward. The camera itself will act as a reminder to the employee that the organization values him or her. This implies that if the employee sees the camera on a frequent basis, or thinks about the camera on a regular basis, there is a greater opportunity that the employee will remember the fact that the organization values him or her. Therefore, the greater the frequency with which an employee remembers, uses, or is reminded of a reward, the greater his or her perceived organizational support is expected to be.

Hypothesis 4: An employee's perceived organizational support will increase with the frequency with which he or she recalls the reward.

### *3.5 Effect of Value on Recalling the Reward*

The valence an employee has towards a reward is also expected to effect the relationship between the frequency with which the employee recalls the reward and the employee's level of perceived organizational support.

If an employee receives a television as a reward, and he or she truly values and enjoys having the television, then as the employee sees, thinks about, or uses the television, he or she is more likely to appreciate the firm for providing it. After all, the television was a reward given to the employee by the



firm in recognition for his or her performance, which demonstrates that the firm truly values the employee. The television is also an item which is highly valued by the employee. Therefore, as the frequency with which the employee sees or uses the television increases, because he or she has strong positive valence toward the television, there is a higher likelihood that the employee will also think more positively of the firm for providing such a reward. Therefore, the stronger the employee's valence towards the reward, the stronger is the effect on perceived organizational support expected to be. Conversely, if the employee has little value for the reward, the effect on perceived organizational support is not expected to be as great.

Hypothesis 5: The increase in perceived organizational support caused by the frequency of recalling the reward will be magnified as the liking of the item increases.

## **4 METHOD**

### **4.1 *Sample***

One hundred and thirty three Account Executives (AE's) from BI were used for this study. BI is an international organization specializing in incentive programs which are used to help motivate sales teams in companies across a variety of industries. Account Executives were chosen because they personally participate in a reward program at BI in which they are able to earn reward points based on their performance results, and the points can later be redeemed for rewards. In addition to personally earning rewards from BI, AE's deal with rewards daily in their work activities. This implies that they think about rewards more than most other employees, making them suitable candidates for participation in this study.

### **4.2 *Procedure***

Data were collected through the use of two web-based surveys separated in time by two weeks; this was done so as not to prime the employees to think about the firm when they were asked about rewards. Because it was necessary to gather data about both rewards earned and perceptions of the organization, asking these questions in the same survey might prime the responses of subsequent questions. The concern about priming responses was especially relevant to the second hypothesis, regarding the link an employee makes between the reward and the organization. In order to measure the directness of the link a free association was used; respondents were asked to think about a reward they had earned from the organization and to list five associations that

came to mind. It was therefore best not to include any reference to the organization when asking about the rewards.

The first survey asked questions pertaining to perceptions of the organization, and established what rewards had been earned by each AE. The intent was to gather employees' perceptions and beliefs related to various conditions of working at BI (for example, relationship with their manager, or commitment to the organization) in order to account for the variance of known antecedents in perceived organizational support. Questions in the second survey pertained specifically to the reward that was noted in the first survey. Questions were developed to test the five hypotheses related to properties of tangible rewards so that any variance these properties account for in perceived organizational support could be measured.

A request was sent by email to 133 AE's notifying them of the survey and requesting their voluntary participation. A link was given to a URL where the survey was hosted, and AE's were asked to click on the link to participate in the survey.

The first page of the survey provided information pertaining to the purpose of the study, and the confidential and voluntary nature of participation in the study<sup>2</sup>.

Respondents were asked to provide their associate ID's in order to login to the survey. This information was requested on both surveys in order to link the responses of the first survey to those of the second survey. Once the link

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<sup>2</sup> Screen shots of the survey can be found in Appendix I & II.

was made between the two surveys, all identifying information was removed from the data.

The survey was conducted on-line as a web based survey, as opposed to more traditional survey methods such as telephone interviews or mail-in surveys. While this format is increasingly becoming a popular survey method, it does raise possible risks when compared to a paper-based survey. One possible risk in using this format is that the population surveyed is required to have both computer access and sufficient computer skills to navigate through the survey. Because AE's at BI are required to use computers in order to access work related information, and because they are provided with a desktop or laptop computer by the organization, it was assumed that using a web based survey would not be a limiting factor in data collection. A key advantage to conducting research in this format is that results are immediate, and the data does not require transcription to a database. This format also allows researchers to collect additional information which would not be available in a paper-based survey such as the length of time required for each respondent to complete the survey.

#### **4.3 Measures**

The first survey consisted of 55 questions as are outlined below. The questions to control for known antecedents of perceived organizational support including organizational justice, distributive justice, leader member exchange, affective organizational commitment, and perceived organizational support

were based on existing measures<sup>3</sup>. Respondents were also asked to list the last three rewards received, and the date they were received. The second survey was administered 10 days after the completion of the first survey. This time frame was considered to be sufficient to allow respondents to answer questions pertaining specifically to rewards earned, without being primed to think about the organization.

The items borrowed from existing measures primarily used 7-point likert scales comprised of the anchors “strongly disagree”, “moderately disagree”, “slightly disagree”, “neither disagree nor agree”, “slightly agree”, “moderately agree”, and “strongly agree”. Because there is no clearly distinguishable difference between the anchors “moderately disagree/agree” and “slightly disagree/agree” I chose to use a 5-point likert scale in the place of existing 7-point scales. The anchors on the 5-point scale were “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “neither disagree nor agree”, “agree”, “strongly agree”.

### **Perceived Organizational Support**

Eisenberger et al (1986) designed a 36-question survey, the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support, to measure the various perceptions employees may have concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well being. In later research this survey was reduced to only 8 items, consisting of 8 questions which had the highest factor loading. Subsequent research has shown that the shortened version of the survey is a reliable measure of perceived organizational support. In later

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<sup>3</sup> A list of the questions, by construct, can be found in Appendix III.

research, Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, and Rhoades (2001) further reduced the number of questions to 6 high-loading items. In their study, these 6 questions were found to be accurate measures of perceived organizational support, and were therefore used to measure perceived organizational support in the current study. Examples of these questions are “BI values by contribution to its well-being” and “BI takes pride in my accomplishments”.

### **Affective Organizational Commitment**

An early organizational commitment questionnaire was developed by Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979), which was designed to address employees attitudes towards their organization. While it helped to consolidate many previous studies to measure commitment, it did not take into account various dimensions which existed within the larger construct. Allen and Meyer (1990) constructed a scale to measure affective, continuance, and normative commitment. The affective commitment questions were subsequently tested and condensed in the literature, and Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, and Rhoades (2001) used these questions, together with a related question from Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) to test affective organizational commitment. These same six questions were used in the current study. Examples of these questions are “I feel emotionally attached to BI” and “working at BI has a great deal of personal meaning to me”.

### **Leader Member Exchange**

Early measures of leader member exchange were used by Scandura, Graen, Novak (1986) as a seven item scale. In later research, Liden and Maslyn

(1998) developed a 12 item scale in order to address the observation that the original scale was unidimensional. The new scale consisted of 12 questions which addressed four constructs within the relationship between employees and their managers consisting of affect, loyalty, contribution, and professional respect. These 12 questions were used in the current study to measure leader member exchange. Examples of these questions are “I like my manager very much as a person” and “my manager would defend me to others in the organization if I made an honest mistake”.

### **Organizational Justice**

Questions related to organizational justice are divided into two separate constructs: distributive justice and procedural justice. Procedural justice was measured using the 12 questions from Moorman, Blakely, Neihoff (1998). Examples of these questions are “accurate information upon which decisions are based is collected” and “you are shown concern for your rights as an employee”. Distributive justice was measured using the 6 items from Price & Mueller (1986). Examples of these questions are “you are fairly rewarded considering the responsibilities that you have” and “you are fairly rewarded for the amount of effort that you put forth”.

### **Human Resource Practices**

Various dimensions of human resource practices that are thought to influence perceived organizational support are discussed in the literature. Although there is no established construct to measure all of these various practices, in this study, an attempt was made to include questions to account for

each of the dimensions noted to influence perceived organizational support. These include rewards, recognition, promotions and growth opportunities, developmental experiences, participation in decision making, pay, and job security. In some cases, like rewards for example, the construct was already addressed by a question in another section of the study (distributive justice in this case) and was therefore not asked again. Questions were developed for this study to measure the employee's perception of each of these factors, and in addition, several questions were adapted from Wayne, Shore, Liden (1997) to measure developmental experiences. Examples of these questions are "I believe there are good growth opportunities for me at BI" and "BI encourages me to participate in formal training and development".

### **Properties of Tangible Rewards**

To test the directness of the link between the reward and the organization, respondents were asked to perform a free association while thinking of a specific reward. The first survey collected the name of a reward which had been earned in the past, and when the respondent logged into the second survey using their associate ID, the server queried a database which plugged in the name of the reward into the question. This method allowed researchers to ask questions about the reward directly without making any reference to the organization. Wording for questions was carefully selected to ensure that the meaning of the question was clear, while avoiding use of such words as "earned" or "received". For example when beginning the second survey respondents were told, "In the previous survey you indicated that you own [item



to be filled in from database]. Please think about your [item], and answer the following questions by clicking in the circle that best represents your answer.” Respondents were then asked to free associate while thinking of that item, and to list anything that comes to mind. To test the frequency of recalling the reward, respondents were asked “how often do you think about your [item]” and “how often are you reminded of your [item]”. Finally, to test the hypotheses pertaining to valence of the reward, respondents were asked “to what extent do you enjoy your [item]?” and “how do you feel about your [item]?”

In addition to these questions, a question was constructed in order to test the suggestions that discretionary actions by the organization will lead to perceived organizational support. The question “BI offers a reward program at its own discretion” was included in the survey.

## 5 RESULTS

From a total of 133 BI Account Executives contacted in the first survey, 87 participated in the survey. Of those, 72 AE's fully completed the survey, for an overall response rate of 65%. In the second survey, 133 AE's were again contacted, and 61 participated in the survey. In the second survey there were 59 fully completed surveys, making the overall response rate 44%. The data were cleaned to eliminate any incomplete responses, and the data for each participant across the two surveys were combined using Microsoft Excel. Analysis was then conducted using the statistical data analysis software STATA and SPSS. The means, standard deviations, and correlations are shown in Table 1 below.

**TABLE 1: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations**

	Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	AOC	3.10	.80								
2	POS	2.68	.49	.70**							
3	LMX	3.39	.62	.48**	.61**						
4	Proc Justice	2.96	.66	.55**	.64**	.53**					
5	Dist Justice	2.69	.82	.49**	.57**	.23**	.50**				
6	Tenure	1.66	1.39	.07	-.23 <sup>†</sup>	-.04	-.04	.00			
7	Dec Making	3.07	.846	.41**	.43**	.53**	.46**	.41**	-.09		
8	Job Security	2.5	1.16	.43**	.40**	.27*	.30**	.33**	.01	.42**	
9	HR Dev	2.95	.70	.37**	.30*	.29*	.15	.27*	.11	.38**	.19

\* p < .05

\*\* p < .01

\*\*\* p < .001

† p < .1

Confirmatory factor analysis was performed using a Varimax rotation to establish a summary of the variables that express the most variance in responses. The final rotated component matrix is shown below in Table 2, along with the alpha reliabilities for each measure.

**TABLE 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis, Alpha Reliabilities**

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Leader Member Exchange      Alpha = .947</b>					
like manager	<b>.834</b>	.111	.134	.196	.217
friend manager	<b>.856</b>	.029	.071	.163	.266
fun manager	<b>.772</b>	.082	.068	.116	.333
defend to superior	<b>.622</b>	.237	.195	.139	-.093
defend if attacked	<b>.821</b>	.313	.026	.434	-.090
defend if mistake	<b>.643</b>	.283	.037	.022	-.042
work beyond descrip	<b>.495</b>	.040	.055	.028	.236
extra effort for mgr	<b>.533</b>	.015	.156	.177	.487
work hardest for mgr	<b>.753</b>	.060	.115	.412	.208
impressed by mgr know	<b>.833</b>	.125	.103	.232	.139
respect mgr knowledge	<b>.816</b>	.086	.045	.252	.126
admire mgr skills	<b>.771</b>	.099	.182	.197	.251
<b>Procedural Justice      Alpha = .955</b>					
clarification allowed	.204	<b>.733</b>	.063	.178	.117
treated with respect	.268	<b>.359</b>	.152	.657	.198
dealt with truthfully	.257	<b>.603</b>	.144	.459	.316
represented fairly	.205	<b>.820</b>	.185	.156	.063
decisions consistent	-.032	<b>.827</b>	.269	.112	.244
adequate justification	.215	<b>.793</b>	.312	.182	.200
accurate information	.135	<b>.769</b>	.256	.224	.198
complete information	.126	<b>.808</b>	.216	.310	.140
opportunity to appeal	-.004	<b>.825</b>	.053	.102	.121
treated with kindness	.228	<b>.326</b>	.065	.745	.121
shown concern	.315	<b>.398</b>	.051	.685	.094
helped to understand	.121	<b>.681</b>	.277	.200	.291
<b>Distributive Justice      Alpha = .956</b>					
base on responsibility	.057	.332	<b>.688</b>	-.021	.298
based on education	.369	.178	<b>.811</b>	.014	.095
based on experience	.240	.210	<b>.878</b>	.090	.026
based on effort	-.007	.193	<b>.854</b>	.215	.123
based on success	.039	.276	<b>.888</b>	.106	.135
based on stress	.196	.115	<b>.819</b>	.206	.298
<b>Affective Commitment      Alpha = .945</b>					
personal meaning	.332	.278	.372	<b>.581</b>	.311
strong belonging	.294	.356	.302	<b>.661</b>	.204
proud to tell others	.129	.285	.106	<b>.773</b>	.307
emotional attachment	.284	.226	.288	<b>.700</b>	.224
retire here	.289	.370	.135	<b>.528</b>	.136
discuss with others	.176	.253	.095	<b>.802</b>	.191
<b>Perceived Organizational Support      Alpha = .892</b>					
values my contribution	.281	.180	.171	.359	<b>.632</b>
cares about well-being	.385	.069	.177	.231	<b>.546</b>
shows little concern	-.279	-.283	-.030	-.247	<b>-.702</b>
pride in accomplish	.129	.079	.181	.424	<b>.490</b>
considers my goals	.315	.330	.271	.385	<b>.500</b>
willing to help	.284	.456	.125	.375	<b>.335</b>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Leader member exchange and distributive justice loaded well as independent factors. All six items in the affective commitment scale loaded together well, but three items from procedural justice also loaded with this factor. These three items loaded less strongly in the procedural justice factor, although the remaining 9 procedural justice items loaded well.

The three questions from procedural justice that loaded independently were “you are treated with respect and dignity”, “you are treated with kindness and consideration” and “you are shown concern for your rights as an employee”. All of these questions seem to address a similar underlying belief based on how the employee feels he or she is personally treated. While procedural justice refers to the evaluation of the process by which decisions are made, interactional justice refers to the evaluation of the interpersonal treatment involved in carrying out a decision (Cropanzano, Prehar, & Chen, 2002). The relationship between these two constructs has been debated in the literature, and it is unclear whether or not they are indeed separate constructs. Based on the ambiguity in the literature as to whether or not these are independent constructs, and based on the fact that the existing 12 item questionnaire has been validated in past research as a measure of procedural justice, the 12 items were grouped together as procedural justice. Furthermore, the alpha reliability of this factor was .955, which is very high, and the procedural justice scale was therefore used as indicated in the measures section of the paper.

In terms of perceived organizational support, when the six items initially loaded, although they had a high alpha reliability (.87) their values were not as

high as some of the other factors. Also, similar values for these items appeared to be embedded in some of the other constructs. This is not surprising considering that the construct of perceived organizational support has some overlapping properties with other constructs, such as procedural justice for example. On the one hand, an example of an item asked in perceived organizational support is “BI shows little concern for me” and an item asked in procedural justice is “When decisions are made at BI you are shown concern for your rights as an employee”. Clearly these two questions have similar underlying beliefs, so it is not surprising that items from perceived organizational support would also have some representation in other constructs. Although the alpha value of this construct was quite good with a value of .87, the result was worrisome because the purpose of the study was to perform a regression on perceived organizational support, and if it did not load well as a construct the integrity of the study would be compromised. A key reason suspected for the reason why perceived organizational support did not load well was because the 6 items for this measure were asked at the end of a lengthy survey. Although there were 55 questions in the first survey the average length of time used to complete the entire survey was 9 minutes. This is a very short duration considering the number and content of questions, and it was suspected that the AE’s hurried through the final pages of the survey, resulting in less than adequate results. Consequently, the 6 perceived organizational questions were added to the end of the second survey.

The perceived organizational support questions asked in the second survey loaded quite strongly in an independent factor, and as well, had a higher alpha value ( $\alpha = .89$ ) than the perceived organizational support questions from the first survey. The second set of perceived organizational support questions were therefore used in the final regression.

Based on the very strong alpha reliabilities and factor results for distributive justice, procedural justice, leader member exchange, affective commitment, and perceived organizational support, the results of the questions for each construct were averaged to form a single variable. Only the items that were previously used in research to define each construct were combined for the new variable. Therefore, any pollution that was caused to the affective commitment construct as a result of the 3 high loading procedural justice items was mitigated. The new variable was then used in the regression to represent each of the 5 constructs. In addition, three variables based on responses to relevant survey questions were used to measure human resource practices. These variables measured job security, decision making opportunities, and developmental experiences.

### **Regression Analysis**

A regression was performed to analyze the impact of leader member exchange, procedural justice and distributive justice on affective organizational commitment. The coefficient values and standard errors for the regression are shown in Table 3. As found in previous literature, procedural justice had a positive effect on affective commitment ( $.47, t = 4.57, p < .001$ ), as did

distributive justice (.21,  $t = 2.85$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and leader member exchange (.21,  $t = 2.28$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

Previous research has suggested that these constructs effect organizational commitment through perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Shore & Wayne, 1993). Perceived organizational support was subsequently introduced into the model to validate this view. Perceived organizational support was highly significant (.47,  $t = 2.78$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The significance of the three previous variables all dropped in value; procedural justice remained statistically significant (.35,  $t = 2.87$ ,  $p < .01$ ), but distribute justice (.16,  $t = 1.72$ ,  $p < .09$ ) and leader member exchange (.14,  $t = 1.26$ ,  $p < .21$ ) were no longer significant.

**TABLE 3: Regression Results I**  
**Dependent Variable = Affective Commitment**

Independent Variable	Initial Model	Final Model
LMX	.215 * (.094)	.140 (.111)
Procedural Justice	.468 *** (.103)	.352 ** (.123)
Distributive Justice	.206 ** (.072)	.160 (.093)
POS		.475 ** (.171)

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

A regression was next performed on perceived organizational support to ensure that the constructs suggested in the research explained its variance.

Leader member exchange, procedural justice, distributive justice, developmental experiences, tenure, job security, and decision making opportunities were regressed on perceived organizational support. Only



procedural justice (.297,  $t = .09$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and tenure (-.086,  $t = .03$ ,  $p < .05$ ) were statistically significant in this regression. Because the remaining variables were unable to explain the variance in perceived organizational support they were dropped from the regression one at a time. The final model which resulted included leader member exchange (.172,  $t = .09$ ,  $p < .05$ ), procedural justice (.332,  $t = .08$ ,  $p < .001$ ), decision making opportunities(.110,  $t = .06$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and tenure (-.087,  $t = .03$ ,  $p < .01$ ) as the variables which explained the variance in perceived organizational support. Results are shown in Table 4 below.

**TABLE 4: Regression Results II**  
**Dependent Variable = Perceived Organizational Support**

<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>Initial Model</b>	<b>Final Model</b>
LMX	.169 (.089)	.172 * (.086)
Procedural Justice	.297 ** (.090)	.332 *** (.082)
Distributive Justice	.082 (.075)	
Job Security	.016 (.043)	
Decision Making	.075 (.066)	.110 * (.055)
Tenure	-.086 * (.031)	-.087 ** (.030)
HR Development	.022 (.067)	

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

Next, having accounted for all of the known variance in perceived organizational support, the residual was used as a dependent variable and regressed with the hypothesis variables: frequency of recall, frequency times valence, as well as discretion. Unfortunately, the data for the variable for directness of the link to the firm were not sufficient to use in the analysis; only

three respondents out of 59 indicated that they think of the firm when recalling the reward.

A correlation between all variables was performed and results are shown along with mean and standard deviation in table 5 below. Valence and recall-valence were highly correlated with a value of .9376, so the regression was tested using both constructs to determine which should be dropped. The coefficients suggested that the interaction effect of recall times valence was picking up the variance in valence. Furthermore, valence showed little variance in its values, so it was dropped from the regression. The regression was performed and recall-valence was the only statistically significant variable (.084,  $t=.031$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Results are shown in table 6.

**TABLE 5: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations**

	mean	sd	POS	Discretion	Valence	Recall-Val
POS	2.69	.49				
Discretion	2.99	.77	.363 **			
Valence	1.58	.56	-.579**	-.177		
(Recall)*(Valence)	4.97	3.62	-.522**	-.220	.864 **	
Recall	2.88	1.45	-.412	-.212	.540 **	.853 **

\* $p < .05$       \*\*  $p < .01$       \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**TABLE 6: Regression Results III**  
**Dependent Variable = Residual**

Independent Variable	Initial Model	Final Model
Valence	.118 (.193)	
Recall-Valence	-.084 * (.031)	-.067*** (.017)
Discretion	-.058 (.076)	

\* $p < .05$       \*\*  $p < .01$       \*\*\*  $p < .001$

## 6 DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that the more an employee likes a reward, combined with the more frequently he or she recalls the reward, the higher the individual's perceived organizational support will be. This means that the more often employees see or think about a reward which was given to them by the organization, provided that they like the reward, the greater is the employees' belief that the organization values them and their contributions. This evidence lends support to the idea that a reward is a tangible demonstration of an organization's support of employees and highlights the importance for organizations to choose rewards for employees that the employees will value.

The impact of tangible rewards on perceived organizational support was studied based on the following properties of rewards: 1) the positive valence an individual has towards a reward, 2) the association an individual makes between the reward and the organization, and 3) the frequency with which an individual is reminded of the reward.

I also considered whether or not the constructs of leader member exchange, organizational justice, and distributive justice had direct effects on affective organizational commitment, or if they only effect it through their influence on perceived organizational support. I found that when perceived organizational support was not included in the model these constructs had direct effects on affective organizational commitment. However, when perceived organizational support was included in the model there were no direct effects of

leader member exchange or distributive justice on affective organizational commitment. Consistent with previous research, this study confirmed that perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between these constructs and organizational commitment. This finding validates the importance of perceived organizational support in ultimately influencing various organizational behaviours which were otherwise thought to lead to affective commitment.

The data collected were not sufficient to test the hypothesis of whether individuals have higher levels of perceived organizational support when they directly link a reward to the organization. Only 12% of respondents who carried out the free association listed the organization as something they think about when thinking of the reward. An example of a response received in the free association is as follows. In the first survey, several respondents indicated that they earned a grill as a reward. In the second survey some free associations that these employees made with the grill were “steak”, “hamburger”, “deck”, and “outdoors”. These responses are quite specific in the sense that they reference very direct, or almost literal, associations with the grill. Perhaps respondents didn’t consider the question in a broader context, like the fact that the grill was earned from BI, but considered only very direct associations with the reward. Furthermore, the questions for the survey were carefully constructed to eliminate any references to the firm so as not to prime the respondents into thinking about BI when answering the questions. Perhaps this accounts for part of the reason that the majority of respondents did not mention

the firm in their association; the question may have been worded such that respondents read the question and only thought of the reward specifically, but not more broadly about what it means to them to own it, or where it originated.

A further explanation for why more associations with the firm were not made may be due to the fact that the firm is not among the first five things an employee thinks of when thinking of the reward. Perhaps if respondents were asked for 10 associations the firm may have appeared more commonly among the responses. It was disappointing that no data could be collected on the directness of the association between the reward and the firm. Future work could investigate a better measure to test this hypothesis.

The results from the study show that it isn't sufficient for employees to recall the reward, but they must also have strong positive valence toward the reward. This highlights the importance that the organization selects appropriate rewards for an individual. If the organization's goal is to show employees how much it values them, and their efforts, then rewards can be an effective demonstration of this sentiment. However, it is likely not sufficient for the organization to provide just any reward, but the reward must be one that the employee values. Because the reward is indeed a physical object symbolizing the organization's recognition and appreciation for the employee, then the organization would want to ensure that this symbol is indicative of how valuable the employee is to the organization. This means that a trivial object may not be sufficient to express to an employee that he or she is valued by the organization. If an organization gives an employee something that the

employee truly desires, it demonstrates that the organization cares enough about the employee to make the effort to find a reward that the employee values. This fact will help to encourage the employee to think of the organization more positively.

The reward system used at BI is structured such that employees are able to choose rewards using a catalogue. The fact that employees can choose their own rewards will help to ensure that they will have strong positive valence towards the reward. Based on the results of this study, this practice appears to be worthwhile as higher valence towards a reward is positively correlated with higher levels of perceived organizational support. For the purposes of this study, the downside to this practice is that there was not a lot of variance in the data for valence. While the results still demonstrated the importance of valence, it would have been nice to see more variance in the responses. Perhaps there was more information to be found pertaining to the valence of a reward, as was indicated by the fact that recall times valence had such a significant impact, but it was not uncovered due to the lack of variance in the valence variable.

In addition to providing employees with rewards that they like, the study indicates that organizations should provide rewards that employees can frequently recall. A tangible reward is well suited for this purpose because it has a physical presence. If an organization rewards employees with a non-tangible item, such as a trip to Hawaii, it is important that after the trip is taken, artifacts of the trip such as souvenirs or pictures are available to remind the employee of the trip. The findings of this study imply that the enjoyment of the

trip, combined with a memorable artifact from the trip, will increase the employee's perceived organizational support. In another example, if the organization provides an employee with a seasonal item such as a barbeque or a set of golf clubs, these items may be recalled less frequently if the employee lives in a climate with cold winter weather. In comparison, rewards such as televisions or stereo systems which can be used and seen regularly may have a greater effect on perceived organizational support. This evidence is consistent with research by Jeffrey (2005) which indicates that unlike cash, tangible incentives are more easily remembered, and will therefore reinforce employee behaviour. Likewise, tangible rewards from an organization will reinforce the fact that the organization values its employees, which will increase perceived organizational support.

The implication of these findings for organizations is that tangible rewards which are liked and remembered will increase employees' beliefs that they are valued by the organization. To gain the best possible advantage from rewards it would be advisable for organizations to first determine which rewards their employees value, and then provide some type of follow-up after the reward is received. For example, if an employee earned a set of golf clubs from the organization and his or her manager asks the employee how she is enjoying them, it will help to enforce the perception that the organization values the employee.

Because the results emphasize the importance of recalling a reward, one may ask, "would a tangible reward that does not have a physical presence have

a similar effect on perceived organizational support”? For example, a massage, a dinner, or a trip to Hawaii are consumable rewards that can only be enjoyed once. After these types of rewards are consumed, will their memory, or related artifacts, continue to have a positive impact on perceived organizational support? In future research it would be interesting to investigate this, as well as to compare tangible and consumable rewards with cash incentives in order to measure the differences they may have on perceived organizational support.

Previous research suggests that discretionary actions on the part of an organization are an indication that the organization values its employees, and it is this demonstration of value that will lead to perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1997; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Moorman et al., 1998; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Shore & Shore, 1985). Contrary to this view, this study found that there was no correlation between an employee’s belief that the BI reward program was discretionary and the employee’s perceived organizational support. This result is puzzling, and future research could endeavor to understand this contradiction further.

There is a possibility that the nature of BI’s reward program adversely effected the employee’s perception of the organization’s contribution of the reward. Because the employees choose their own rewards, although the organization makes the choice possible, the organization is somewhat removed from the equation, and the rewards may appear to employees to be the result of their own efforts. This paper argues that rewards are an effective way that organizations can demonstrate support to their employees because rewards



signify that the organization recognizes and values the contributions of its employees. As a result, when the organization appears to be somewhat removed from offering the reward this may lessen the impact the reward has in demonstrating to employees that the organization values them. In this regard, it is necessary that employees view rewards as distinct from the contractual obligations of the organization (i.e. their salary). A survey question was asked to ascertain if the employees regard the reward program as discretionary. Sixty-nine out of eighty-seven people who responded to this question either agreed or strongly agreed that the reward system used at BI was at the discretion of the organization. Therefore, because the large majority of respondents view the reward program as distinct from contractual compensation by the firm, the effect of the rewards on perceived organizational support is not compromised.

With respect to the population surveyed, the fact that Account Executives sell reward packages as the basis for their work may have biased the sample. As well, regarding the generalizability of the results, AE's at BI are generally high income earners who are in positions with a fair amount of responsibility. The rewards offered at this level of the organization are fairly valuable including trips to Disneyland, plasma televisions, and golf clubs. In the future, it would be interesting to study whether or not these results generalize to a lower income population, or if perhaps less valuable prizes are equally effective in increasing perceived organizational support. Furthermore, it would be interesting to compare the effect of different categories or price ranges of rewards to measure their impact on perceived organizational support.

Leader member exchange refers to the nature of the relationship between a superior and subordinate. When managers use different approaches to deal with different subordinates, it results in the creation of unique relationships, or exchanges, with the manager. At one extreme the relationship may be very formal and based on a contract, and at the other extreme it could involve mutual liking, trust, and respect (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Affective organizational commitment refers to the extent to which employees feel emotionally attached to their organizations. In this study, leader member exchange was found to have a strong positive relationship with organizational commitment, however, once perceived organizational support was introduced into the model this relationship was no longer significant. The analysis demonstrated that perceived organizational support accounts for any effects that arise from the relationship an employee has with his or her supervisor, at the expense of these effects on the employee's affective organizational commitment. This finding emphasizes the fact that a manager is the organization's representative to an employee and the actions of a manager will strongly impact how an employee views the organization's support. In the case of BI, this finding can be explained by the fact that AE's work out of branch offices in their local cities. AE's have limited interaction with the head office, or in other words, the organization, and their manager's actions are therefore seen as the organization's actions.

With respect to organizational justice, procedural justice refers to the perceived fairness with which rules or procedures in the organization are

determined (Moorman et al., 1998). Distributive justice refers to the perceived fairness with which they are allocated (Price & Mueller, 1986). It was not surprising that these constructs effect an employee's affective commitment toward the organization. Fairness is an important dimension of an employee's satisfaction of his or her employment in an organization and procedural justice and distributive justice are demonstrations of the organizations position towards fairness. If employees believe that the organization is fair in the way it establishes rules and in the way it distributes rewards (or punishments) based on these rules, then it follows that the employee will have a positive outlook towards the organization.

I found that perceived organizational support fully mediated the relationship between distributive justice and affective commitment, but only partially mediated the effect of procedural justice on affective commitment. Similar to the above explanation of leader member exchange having an important impact on this population's perceived organizational support, distributive justice is likewise seen as directly impacting the employee's perception of support. Because it is managers who primarily distribute the rewards, this once again emphasizes the importance of a manager's actions in this population's perception of the organization's support.

With respect to decision-making opportunities, respondents were asked for the extent of their agreement/disagreement with the statement "At BI, I am encouraged to participate in decision-making". Results of the regression showed that the perception of having opportunities to participate in decision

making had a significant effect on perceived organizational support. The theory behind perceived organizational support is that the organization values the employee and the employee's contributions. If this is in fact the case, then it would be expected that the organization would trust, and even encourage, employees to make decisions which could help to direct the outcome of the organization. After all, if the organization values the employee and his or her contributions, then the organization would be expected to benefit from the contributions of the employee.

In terms of tenure, the regression found that the length of employment with the organization had a statistically significant effect on perceived organizational support. Interestingly though, this correlation was negative meaning that the longer an employee had worked for the organization, the lower was the employee's perceived organizational support. At first glance this finding is counter-intuitive, as an employee who has remained with an organization for some length of time would be expected to enjoy working for the organization, or to have some sort of commitment to the organization, which is why that employee has remained. However, perceived organizational support refers strictly to whether the employee feels that he or she is valued by the organization. The negative correlation between length of employment and perceived organizational support indicates that the longer an employee remains with the organization, the less the employee feels he or she is valued. Perhaps after having worked at an organization for an extended period of time employees begin to feel that they are taken for granted. If an employee

performs well when he or she is new to an organization then that employee will likely receive praise, encouragement and support from his or her peers and supervisors. Over time, if the employee continues to maintain that same level of performance, the performance may become expected of him or her by peers and supervisors, and the praise, encouragement, and support may begin to fade. While the employee is continually meeting or exceeding expectations this may no longer be remarkable to others in the organization, and the employee may begin to feel that he or she is not as highly valued by the organization. A similar result was found in research by Moideenkutty et al, (1999) in which employees with more tenure in an organization have less positive attitudes toward the organization. They explain this result as a perception that there are limited opportunities for advancement as employees become older. Future research could verify if this finding was unique to the population tested, or if it can be generalized, and why those employees who have been with the firm the longest feel the least amount of support.

## **7 CONCLUSION**

Employees' who believe that they are supported and valued by their organization will actively pursue the organization's goals, and will display productive and desirable workplace behaviours such as increased job involvement, reduced absenteeism, and increased organizational citizenship behaviours.

The use of tangible rewards was proposed to be an effective way to increase employees' perceived organizational support because rewards are physical representations of an organization's support, and they demonstrate to employees that the organization recognizes their accomplishments and values their contributions. The extent to which employees like a reward, associate the reward with the organization, and think about the reward were measured against the employees' perceived organizational support.

The results of the study showed that employees have higher perceived organizational support when they receive a reward that they like, and that they frequently recall. These findings underscore the value to firms in using tangible rewards to help elicit better performance from their employees. However, in order to ensure that the rewards are effective, it is important that the firm selects rewards which are desirable to employees, and which the employees are likely to remember.

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## APPENDIX 1 - Survey 1

Page: 1 / 6

The first section of the survey asks you to provide some background information

1. Please indicate your gender:

- ☐ Male  
☐ Female

2. Including yourself, please indicate the number of people living in your home.

- ☐ 1  
☐ 2  
☐ 3  
☐ 4  
☐ 5  
☐ 6 or more

3. How many years have you worked for BI?

- ☐ less than 1 year  
☐ 1 - 2 years  
☐ 2 - 5 years  
☐ 5 - 10 years  
☐ more than 10 years

4. On average, how many times in a year do you redeem your award points?

- ☐ less than once a year  
☐ about 1 time a year  
☐ about 2 times a year  
☐ about 3 times a year  
☐ more than 3 times a year

5. Please list the last 3 rewards that you redeemed your award points for, including the approximate date of redemption.

Note: Only list those items you have kept for yourself, not those used as gifts.

	Reward	Redemption Date (Month/Year)	
Reward #1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="January"/>	<input type="text" value="2004"/>
Reward #2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="January"/>	<input type="text" value="2004"/>
Reward #3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="January"/>	<input type="text" value="2004"/>

☐ I have not received a reward from BI

Please click submit to proceed to page 2.

Listed below, and on the next several pages, are statements that represent possible opinions that you may have about working at BI.

Please indicate the extent of your AGREEMENT or DISAGREEMENT with each statement by clicking in the circle that best represents your point of view.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
6. The reward program that BI uses shows that the organization makes a special effort to recognize employees.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I believe there are good growth opportunities for me at BI.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. In the positions that I have held at BI, I have often been given additional challenging assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. In the positions that I have held at BI, I have often been assigned projects that have enabled me to develop and strengthen new skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. BI encourages me to participate in formal training and development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. At BI, I am encouraged to participate in decision-making.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. I think that my job at BI is secure and I hardly ever worry about finding another job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Using the scale below please rate how fairly you feel you are rewarded, given each of the conditions.

To what extent are you fairly rewarded...					
	Very Unfairly	Unfairly	Undecided	Fairly	Very Fairly
13. ...considering the responsibilities that you have.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. ...taking into account the amount of education and training that you have.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. ...in view of the amount of experience that you have.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. ...for the amount of effort that you put forth.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. ...for the work that you have done well.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. ...for the stresses and strains of your job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please click submit to proceed to page 4.

Submit

In this section you are asked for your perceptions of workplace equity.

In answering the following 12 questions, think about the day-to-day decisions made about worker responsibilities, schedules, rewards, and general treatment. For each statement, indicate your AGREEMENT or DISAGREEMENT.

<b>When decisions about other employees in general, or you in particular, are made at BI ...</b>					
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Disagree nor Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
19. ...requests for clarification and additional information are allowed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. ...you are treated with respect and dignity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. ...you are dealt with in a truthful manner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. ...all the sides affected by the decisions are represented.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. ...the decisions are applied with consistency to the parties affected.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. ...you are offered adequate justification for the decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Disagree nor Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
25. ...accurate information upon which the decisions are based is collected.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. ...complete information upon which the decisions are based is collected.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. ...opportunities are provided to appeal or challenge the decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. ...you are treated with kindness and consideration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29. ...you are shown concern for your rights as an employee.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30. ...you are helped to understand the reasons for the decision.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please click submit to proceed to page 5.

Submit

The purpose of this section is to examine your perceptions about your manager.  
 In the next 12 questions please indicate the extent of your AGREEMENT or DISAGREEMENT with each statement by clicking in the circle that best represents your point of view.  
 We would like to remind you that your answers are strictly confidential and will not be shared with your manager.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
31. I like my manager very much as a person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. My manager is the kind of person one would like to have as a friend.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33. My manager is a lot of fun to work with.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
34. My manager defends my work actions to a superior, even without complete knowledge of the issue in question.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
35. My manager would come to my defense if I were "attacked" by others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

  

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
36. My manager would defend me to others in the organization if I made an honest mistake.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
37. I do work for my manager that goes beyond what is specified in my job description.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
38. I am willing to apply extra efforts, beyond those normally required, to meet my manager's work goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
39. I do not mind working my hardest for my manager.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
40. I am impressed with my manager's knowledge of his/her job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
41. I respect my manager's knowledge of and competence on the job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
42. I admire my manager's professional skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please click submit to proceed to page 6.

Submit

This is the final section of the survey.

Please indicate the extent of your AGREEMENT or DISAGREEMENT with each of the statements below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
43. BI values my contribution to its well-being.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
44. BI really cares about my well-being.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
45. BI shows <i>little</i> concern for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
46. BI takes pride in my accomplishments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
47. BI strongly considers my goals and values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
48. BI is willing to help me if I need a special favor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
49. BI offers a reward program at its own discretion. (i.e. BI is not required to offer the program but chooses to do so)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
50. Working at BI has a great deal of personal meaning to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
51. I feel a strong sense of belonging to BI.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
52. I am proud to tell others I work at BI.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
53. I feel emotionally attached to BI.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
54. I would be happy to work at BI until I retire.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
55. I enjoy discussing BI with people who do not work here.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please click submit to save your responses and complete the survey.

Submit

## APPENDIX II - Survey2

In the previous survey you indicated that you own .  
Please think about your , and answer the following questions by clicking in the circle that best represents your answer.

i. To what extent do you enjoy your ?

very much	somewhat	neutral	very little	not at all
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

ii. How often do you think about your ?

several times a day	daily	a few times a week	weekly	a few times a month	rarely
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

iii. How do you feel about your ?

extremely positive	positive	neutral	negative	extremely negative
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

iv. How often are you reminded of your ?

several times a day	daily	a few times a week	weekly	a few times a month	rarely
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The next question asks you to free associate. For example, when I ask you to think about **December** what comes to mind?

You may have thought of: winter, snow, Christmas, New Years, etc.

v. Now please think about your and list the first five things that come to mind.

(Please note: There is no 'right answer' to this question. We just want to know what pops into your head when you think about your .)

1.	<input type="text"/>
2.	<input type="text"/>
3.	<input type="text"/>
4.	<input type="text"/>
5.	<input type="text"/>

Please indicate your answer by clicking in the circle that best represents your point of view.

1) In terms of points, to what extent would you describe yourself as a "collector" or a "redeemer"?

Note:

- "Collectors" are people who save their award points in order to redeem them for something of high value in the future.
- "Redeemers" are people who redeem their award points as soon as they have enough to redeem them for something.

Collector	Somewhat of a Collector	Neither	Somewhat of a Redeemer	Redeemer
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2) Approximately how many points have you saved to date?

Number of points:

3) In the future, do you plan to redeem your points for a specific item?

<input type="radio"/>	Yes (I have something specific in mind)
<input type="radio"/>	No (I have nothing in particular in mind)
<input type="radio"/>	Undecided

If you answered 'yes' to the above question, please answer the following two questions.  
Otherwise please scroll to the bottom of the page and click "submit"

4) Please indicate the item that you plan to redeem your points for.

Item:

5) How often do you think about the item which you plan to redeem for in the future?

several times a day	daily	a few times a week	weekly	a few times a month	rarely
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please click submit to save your responses and proceed to the last page.



This is the final section of the survey.  
Please indicate the extent of your AGREEMENT or DISAGREEMENT with each of the statements below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
6. BI values my contribution to its well-being.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. BI really cares about my well-being.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. BI shows <i>little</i> concern for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. BI takes pride in my accomplishments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. BI strongly considers my goals and values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. BI is willing to help me if I need a special favor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please click submit to save your responses and complete the survey.

Submit

## **APPENDIX III - Survey Questions by Construct**

### **Perceived Organizational Support**

1. BI values my contributions to its well-being.
2. BI really cares about my well-being.
3. BI shows little concern for me.
4. BI takes pride in my accomplishments.
5. BI strongly considers my goals and values.
6. BI is willing to help me if I need a special favor.

### **Affective Organizational Commitment**

1. Working at BI has a great deal of personal meaning to me.
2. I feel a strong sense of belonging to BI.
3. I am proud to tell others I work at BI.
4. I feel emotionally attached to BI.
5. I would be happy to work at BI until I retire.
6. I enjoy discussing BI with people who do not work here.

### **Leader-Member Exchange**

1. I like my manager very much as a person.
2. My manager is the kind of person one would like to have as a friend.
3. My manager is a lot of fun to work with.
4. My manager defends my work actions to a superior, even without complete knowledge of the issue in question.
5. My manager would come to my defense if I were “attacked” by others.

6. My manager would defend me to others in the organization if I made an honest mistake.
7. I do work for my manager that goes beyond what is specified in my job description.
8. I am willing to apply extra efforts, beyond those normally required, to meet my manager's work goals.
9. I do not mind working my hardest for my manager.
10. I am impressed with my manager's knowledge of his/her job.
11. I respect my manager's knowledge of and competence on the job.
12. I admire my manager's professional skills.

### **Procedural Justice**

When decisions about other employees in general, or you in particular, are made in this company...

1. ... requests for clarification and additional information are allowed.
2. ... you are treated with respect and dignity.
3. ... you are dealt with in a truthful manner.
4. ... all the sides affected by the decisions are represented.
5. ... the decisions are applied with consistency to the parties affected.
6. ... you are offered adequate justifications for the decisions.
7. ... accurate information upon which the decisions are based is collected.
8. ... complete information upon which the decisions are based is collected.
9. ... opportunities are provided to appeal or challenge the decisions.

10. ... you are treated with kindness and consideration.
11. ... you are shown concern for your rights as an employee.
12. ... you are helped to understand the reasons for the decision.

### **Distributive Justice**

To what extent are you fairly rewarded...

1. ... considering the responsibilities that you have.
2. ... taking into account the amount of education and training that you have.
3. ... in view of the amount of experience that you have.
4. ... for the amount of effort that you put forth.
5. ... for the work that you have done well.
6. ... for the stresses and strains of your job.

### **HR Practices**

1. I believe there are good growth opportunities for me at BI.
2. In the positions that I have held at BI, I have often been given additional challenging assignments.
3. In the positions that I have held at BI, I have often been assigned projects that have enabled me to develop and strengthen new skills.
4. BI encourages me to participate in formal training and development.
5. At BI, I am encouraged to participate in decision-making.
6. I think that my job at BI is secure and I hardly ever worry about finding another job.